DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 431 402 IR 019 693

TITLE	Who Donates to Public Broadcasting? Profiles of Donors from the Monitor Survey. CPB Research Notes No. 118.
INSTITUTION	Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	1999-05-00
NOTE	7p.; For related document, see ED 415 829.
PUB TYPE	Numerical/Quantitative Data (110) -- Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Attitudes; *Audience Analysis; *Donors; *Fund Raising; Individual Characteristics; Programming (Broadcast); Public Support; *Public Television; Radio; Surveys; Tables (Data); Television Viewing
IDENTIFIERS	*Public Radio

ABSTRACT

As part of the annual Yankelovich Monitor survey, extensive demographic, attitudinal, and product usage data were gathered about people who donate money to public broadcasting. Of the total population polled, 11% said they had donated to public television, and 4% said they had donated to public radio in the past two years. This report explores the characteristics of donors to public broadcasting and suggests how this information can be useful to development managers. Findings are discussed in terms of demographics, radio and television crossover, charitable habits, confidence and self perception, attitudes about learning, savings and disposable income, musical tastes, leisure activities, television viewing habits, and privacy issues. Applications of this information are suggested for stations attempting to target programming, underwriting, and fundraising toward their current audience and potential donors. (AEF)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

IR

Research Notes

No. 118, May 1999

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J. Jones

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Who Donates To Public Broadcasting?

Profiles of Donors from the Monitor Survey

ED 431 402

People who donate money to public television or public radio have more in common than just their usage of public broadcasting. Survey data show the differences between the donor and non-donor populations go beyond simply watching more public TV or listening to more public radio or merely having more disposable income. Some of these significant differences are perceptions about the following:

- Community—and the importance of contributing to one's community;
- Education—and the importance of learning throughout one's life;
- Self-worth—a belief in one's own abilities.

As part of the annual Yankelovich Monitor survey, CPB gathered extensive demographic, attitudinal, and product usage data about people who donate money to public broadcasting.[1] Of the total population polled, eleven percent said they had donated to public television and four percent said they had donated to public radio in the past two years. This research note will explore characteristics of donors to public broadcasting and suggest how this information can be useful to development managers. Detailed information about the contributing audience can help managers maintain and grow member support.[2]

Demographics

Donors to public television and public radio overall are older, proportionately more male, college educated, and white in comparison to the total population. The median household income for donors to public television and public radio is $55,000 compared to $45,000 for the total population. The average age of the public television donor is 51; for public radio donors, the average age is 47.

Radio and Television Crossover

Among donors, there is considerable crossover from public radio listening and contributing to public television viewing and contributing. More than two-thirds of the radio donors also contributed to public television. Public radio listeners and donors are

[1] Yankelovich Partners conducted a survey with 2,500 respondents in 1998.

[2] According to the CPB Annual Revenue Report, membership is the largest source of income for public broadcasting. In 1997, membership or subscription contributions provided 24% of public broadcasting's $1.9 billion dollar income.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING 901 E Street NW • Washington, DC 20004-2037 • (202) 879-9600

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

IR019693

also more likely to watch public television than the general population. Eighty-eight percent of public radio donors reported watching public television in the past week. Similarly, public television donors were seven times as likely as the general population to contribute to public radio, with 22 percent contributing.

Charitable Habits

Donors to both public radio and public television tend to donate more to charities overall than the general population. They are more than twice as likely as the total population to have donated more than $500 to charity in the past year, with approximately one-fourth of public broadcasting donors reporting donations of more than $500 to charities. While slightly more than half of the total population donates to charity, 80 percent of public television donors and 71 percent of public radio donors report donating money to charity. While 28 percent of the total population donates time to charity, public broadcasting donors are more likely to give of their time to charities—48 percent of public radio donors and 53 percent of public television donors. Seventy percent of public broadcasting donors describe themselves as "charitable." When asked about their obligation to contribute to their community, public broadcasting donors were more likely to *strongly* agree.

I feel I have an obligation to make a contribution to the community I live in.

Percentage	Total pop.	Public radio donors	Public TV donors
Strongly agree	12	25	19
Agree	64	62	66
Disagree (tot.)	24	13	15

Over 40 percent of public broadcasting donors describe themselves as "commmunity-oriented," versus 28 percent of the total population.

Confidence and Self Perception

Donors have the most confidence in their own abilities (82%), and an older person's advice (63% for TV donors and 67% for radio donors)—these figures are virtually the same as in prior surveys. Donors have a high level of confidence in advice from doctors (54% for TV donors and 51% for radio donors), and recommendations made by pharmacists (58%). However, the confidence in doctors has dropped somewhat since the last survey. Although the overall percentage is lower, television donors have more confidence than non-donors in advice from financial planners, bankers or lawyers, reports in magazines, and recommendations by travel agents. Radio donors have more confidence than non-donors in reports in magazines, recommendations made by travel agents, and the federal government. Both donors and non-donors have similarly low levels of confidence in news reports on television and in newspapers, and the ability of public schools to educate children.

More donors to public broadcasting described themselves as "intelligent," "self-confident," "competent," and "well-educated," than non-donors. They also see themselves as "open to new ideas," "not prejudiced," and "tolerant."

Attitudes about Learning
Ninety-four percent of television donors identified themselves as "always looking to learn something new," as compared to 88 percent of radio donors.

Fifty percent of donors to public television have a college degree or higher, while only 17 percent of non-donors have a college-level education. Forty-four percent of radio donors have a college degree or higher.

Consequently, the groups have different views of education. Non-donors are more likely to believe education is important "as a means of getting ahead in the world," while donors are more likely to believe education is important "as a means of becoming a more cultured, well-rounded person."

Why is education important?

Percentage	Total pop.	Radio donors	Frequent Public Radio listeners	TV donors	Pub. TV viewers
For getting ahead	46	34	39	34	42
To be well-rounded	38	53	46	48	44
For its own sake	13	12	14	18	13

Savings and Disposable Income
Television donors are more likely than the general population to be saving money for various aspects of their future. These include retirement, vacation, emergencies, and their children's education. Retirement was the most often-mentioned item for savings with both TV and radio donors--more than half of the TV donors are saving for their retirement, compared to 40 percent of radio donors.

Vacations and travel rate highly with donors. As noted above, saving for vacations is a high priority. Unlike non-donors, donors prefer to spend extra money on a trip rather than buying something expensive to keep. More than 60 percent say they have taken weekend trips.

Musical Tastes
Not surprisingly, typical public radio music formats were the top choices with public radio donors. The types of music most frequently listened to by public radio donors were classical (48%) and jazz (43%). "Oldies" music was the third most popular (42%). Traditionally however, oldies do not dominate the play lists of most public radio stations. Among public television donors, "oldies" were at the top of the charts (56%) with easy listening second, and classical music third.

Leisure Activities
The top three leisure activities for donors to public broadcasting were reading, spending time with friends and family, and watching television. Non-donors picked the same three activities as their top choices; however, watching television was their first choice.

Activities Most Likely To Do With Spare Time for Fun & Enjoyment

	TV Donors	Radio Donors	Total Pop.
read	**73%**	**67%**	54%
spend time with friends and family	57%	52%	54%
watch television	55%	62%	62%
call friends and family	51%	42%	49%
take a walk	49%	47%	43%
go to the movies	40%	41%	40%
work in the yard	**47%**	41%	34%
garden	**42%**	32%	27%
attend concerts/live performances	36%	33%	22%
shopping	25%	24%	33%
exercise	29%	**43%**	23%
visit a museum	23%	**30%**	14%
go online	12%	**19%**	11%

A significantly greater percentage of people in the television donor category enjoyed gardening and working in the yard, while radio donors were more inclined to exercise, go online, or visit a museum. Both radio and television donors were more likely to enjoy reading than the total population.

Television Viewing Habits

Television donors are more likely to be "appointment viewers." Seventy-one percent turn on the television to watch a specific program, compared to 57 percent of non-donors. Conversely, they are less likely to "surf" channels than non-donors. Both television and radio donors watch about the same amount of television, between three and three and a half hours on a typical weekday or weekend day. They tend to watch slightly less television than non-donors.

Donors watch more news and science and nature programming than non-donors, and they watch less of everything else, including nighttime comedies, current affairs and entertainment programming and late night entertainment. Eighty-six percent of television donors said they watched public television within the last week, compared to only 52 percent of non-donors. Radio donors are also in the weekly audience with 88 percent reporting past week viewing of public television.

Not surprisingly, donors are found among the regular viewers to most of the PBS signature series. Even though these signature series are not often pledge programs, they are favorites among public television donors.

Percentage of the audience who are donors:

30% or more	**25-29%**	**20- 25 %**
Charlie Rose	American Experience	Great Performances
The Newshour with Jim Lehrer	Antiques Roadshow	NOVA
Washington Week in Review	Julia Child	This Old House
	Live from Lincoln Center	Victory Garden
	Masterpiece Theatre	

Public television donors are more likely to tune in to cable to watch news, business, informational/lifestyle programming, classic movies, performing arts, and historical documentaries than the total population. The most often mentioned television programs regularly viewed are listed below. While there are some similarities in the donor categories, the radio donors' choices appear to reflect a slightly younger and more male group than the TV donors.

TV Donors	Radio Donors	Total Population
60 Minutes	60 Minutes	20/20
20/20	Seinfeld	Home Improvement
Home Improvement	Home Improvement	Seinfeld
Seinfeld	X Files	60 Minutes
A& E's Biography	ER	ER
This Old House	20/20	Wheel of Fortune
Dateline NBC	Law & Order	ABC's Mon. Night Football
Jeopardy	A& E's Biography	Dateline NBC
Frasier	ABC's Mon. Night Football	48 Hours
ER	NOVA	Cops

Privacy Issues

Participants in the Yankelovich survey agreed that it has become far too easy for businesses to find out important information about themselves. Serious violations of privacy included sales of mailing lists without permission of those named; businesses collecting and supplying data to marketing companies; and unsolicited phone calls for the purposes of selling products or services, and unsolicited phone calls for fund-raising. This year's survey also measured reaction to unsolicited e-mails for selling products or services. All of these practices were found to be serious violations of privacy by more than half of the donor segment.

In most instances, donors to public broadcasting were more sensitive to these marketing tactics. For example, 74 percent of TV donors objected to unsolicited phone calls for selling purposes as compared to 62 percent of non-donors. Fewer donors and non-donors find unsolicited phone calls for fundraising purposes to be serious violations of privacy. Nonetheless, 62 percent of donors still felt that it was a serious privacy violation. In general, public television donors were more often concerned about these issues. Among the total population, concerns about privacy tend to increase with age.

Applications of These Data

Overall, this survey confirms much of what is already known about the public broadcasting audience and donor groups. For stations attempting to target programming, underwriting, and fundraising toward their current audience and potential donors, we suggest the following possible applications for this information.

To Whom Will They Listen?

Which underwriters are likely to capture the attention of the donor audience? Donors to public broadcasting value advice from doctors, pharmacists, financial planners and bankers, magazine reports and recommendations by travel agents. These business areas are more likely to resonate with viewers and listeners, particularly the core audience that

donates to your station. Information about these services is likely to be perceived as valuable, rather than merely intrusive.

Donors have the most confidence in their own abilities and in an older person's advice. While this information has fewer implications for underwriting, it is useful for fundraising. For example, older radio and television personalities may be able to exercise a greater influence on the decision to donate to public broadcasting.

What Will Grab Their Interest?

Reading was the number one activity donors were most likely to do with their spare time for fun and enjoyment. These data suggest that books would make effective fundraising premiums, and books by and about public radio personalities and events could be used to generate revenue for stations. Other activities with high interest level include travel, gardening, exercise, and museum attendance. Finding ways to incorporate these interests into fund-raising would resonate well with donors.

How Do They Spend Their Money?

Donors have a higher median household income than non-donors. This is most likely due to a correlation of income with education. Retirement is the highest priority for savings with all groups. Vacation is the second highest priority with all groups except public television donors, who are more concerned with saving for emergencies. Donors will respond well to programming about issues related to retirement, especially financial planning for retirement. Travel and vacation planning will be another strong programming interest. Premiums geared to travel and financial planning are likely to motivate donors to increased pledges.

Keep It Private!

Recently privacy issues have become a topic of public concern and media attention. As public broadcasting fundraising efforts expand beyond the traditional on-air pledge drive, fund-raisers need to take care with the issue of privacy to viewers and listeners. If stations choose to solicit by telephone, for example, they need to be aware of possible negative reactions from more than sixty percent of the donors. Stations that do not use these tactics might publicize pledge drives as an alternative to more invasive types of fund-raising. If stations do not sell mailing lists or share member information with others, let donors know that.

Finally, building message points around the importance of ***community,*** and ***education*** will resonate with donors. And it won't hurt to remind them that donating to their local public station is the ***smart*** thing to do!

If you have any questions about these data, please contact Janice Jones at (202) 879-9677, fax (202) 783-1019, or e-mail jjones@cpb.org. We also welcome any comments and recommendations about how to make the data more useful to you.